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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: MEDIA REPORTS ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING CASES

REF: A) Astana 0368;  
B) Astana 0165;  
C) Astana 1206

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11. The following is a summary of local media reports of human trafficking cases in Kazakhstan February-April 2009. Septel will summarize media May-July 2009.

#### TRAFFICKING IN CHILDREN

12. February 2, Interfax; February 3, "Liter," February 5 Novosti, February 6 "Kazpravda": A 28-year-old Russian man was arrested in Akmola Oblast for attempting to sell a baby. Alexei Krukovskiy, who had come to Szhuchinsk looking for work in March 2007, met a single mother and attempted to sell her one-and-a-half-year-old daughter to fund his return to Russia. He took the child to the Baiterek Hotel, where he was arrested for trying to sell the child to undercover police officers for \$1,300.

13. February 16, "Megapolis": An additional case may be opened against Zhanibek Kushaliyev, former Chief of Medicine at the Atyrau Oblast Hospital, who was arrested in January for attempting to sell a newborn infant for \$1,900 (REF A). On January 23, a woman reported to police that Kushkalyev sold her a baby girl for \$2,000 in May 2007. The Prosecutor General has ordered the creation of an investigation group headed by the Atyrau prosecutor and including the Atyrau Department of Interior and Financial Police.

14. March 5, Interfax: Two women in Zhanaozen, Mangystau Oblast, were convicted of trafficking in infants and sentenced to five years in prison. In February 2008, a 26-year-old Uzbek woman sold her newborn baby to one of the women for \$300 and signed a letter giving up her parental rights.

#### PROSECUTOR SEEKS DISMISSAL OF JUDGE IN TIP CASE

15. February 2, Interfax: A disciplinary commission on judicial ethics in Karaganda initiated a disciplinary case against a judge in the Abai Region. The oblast prosecutor has sought the dismissal of the judge who, in July 2008, handed down a three-year suspended sentence to the owner of a farm convicted of exploiting a

42-year-old. In November 2008, the oblast-level court sentenced the trafficker to 10 years in prison (Ref B).

#### POLICE ANTI-TRAFFICKING OPERATION

¶6. During Operation "Stop Trafficking" March 10-20, police checked night clubs, saunas, hotels, and tourist and employment agencies for evidence of human trafficking, rescuing victims and arresting traffickers and pimps. The following newspaper articles reported the results of the operation. (NOTE: INL sponsored an NGO-implemented information campaign in conjunction with the operation, during which information brochures were disseminated, and high-risk groups, including train passengers, were informed about the dangers of trafficking. Ref C reports on this campaign. END NOTE.)

¶7. March 21, "Kazinform": During Operation "Stop Trafficking," officers from the Pavlodar Department of Interior (DVD) checked saunas, hotels, and restaurants in Pavlodar, Ekibastus, and Aksu for evidence of prostitution, pimping, and human trafficking. The Pavlodar DVD arrested seven pimps and registered 89 prostitutes during last year's operation. Arrests have been made in two pimping cases investigated this year in the Pavlodar Oblast. In one case, a woman provided an under-aged girl for sexual exploitation in hotels.

¶8. March 20, "Izvestiya Kazakhstan": One case of labor exploitation and four cases of pimping were uncovered in Kostanai during Operation "Stop Trafficking." A businessman forced a 42-year-old man to work in his marble workshop for three months without pay and under threat of violence.

¶9. March 17, "Kazinform"; March 20, "Izvestiya Kazakhstan":

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Nurbahyt Nabyev, the Deputy Chief of the Organized Crime Division of the Almaty DVD, reported that police uncovered two cases of forced prostitution during a one-week operation (see paragraphs 15-16). Nabyev stated that such operations are important not only for the investigation of cases of forced labor and forced prostitution, but also allow police to register prostitutes working voluntarily. Though prostitution is not illegal in Kazakhstan, all prostitutes discovered during police raids are registered and checked in police databases. Prostitutes are also required to have regular medical screening and HIV tests. Nabyev also declared that increased sentences for those found guilty of pimping is beginning to scare people out of the business.

¶10. March 13, Transport police in the Western DVD uncovered one case during Operation "Stop Trafficking." A 48-year-old from Uzbekistan trafficked was trafficked to Kazakhstan with the promise of a high-paying job. Traffickers moved him and his two children via rail to Mangystau Oblast and on to a village in the Atyrau Oblast, where a woman sold them for \$100. A criminal case was opened.

#### NGO REPORTING

¶11. April 10, Zakon.kz: The following stories were reported by a local NGO.

--A resident of an apartment building in Almaty reported to police that small children were in the public areas of the building. The police found that the owner had hired a woman to clean the building, but all cleaning services were being performed by 10-13 year old children, who were not attending school. The children refused to tell police who hired them and if they were being paid. The woman originally hired could not be located.

--After a woman in the Almaty Oblast contacted police about her missing daughter, the police found the girl in a brothel with five other girls, ranging in age from 13 to 17 years old. All girls had signs of physical abuse and said that they had been kept in the brothel against their will for more than six months.

--The NGO's call center received a call from a teenage girl who

reported that she had been raped by a man who "bought" her for \$100. When the man was arrested, he claimed that he thought the girl was a prostitute and did not know that she was a teenager.

#### SEXUAL EXPLOTATION

¶12. February 10, "Liter": A 55-year-old in Atyrau, who advertised himself as a clairvoyant bio-therapist and locally renowned for his abilities to counteract the evil eye, cure alcoholism, and set broken bones, was arrested for pimping following an undercover police operation. The man reportedly maintained a brothel and had been pimping since January.

¶13. February 16, "Megapolis": Two 20-year-old former prostitutes were arrested in a Kyzylorda train station for attempting to traffic to two undercover police officers to Astana. The women were reported to police by another woman who was offered \$800 for each young attractive woman she could bring to the two. The recruiters allegedly had an agreement with pimps in Astana to supply them with new prostitutes from the regions.

¶14. March 10, Interfax: Police found four Uzbek women working as prostitutes in a sauna and arrested the pimp as he received \$100. Police reported that last year they arrested 24 pimps and filed charges against 20 pimps.

¶15. March 17, Interfax: Police arrested a 29-year-old madam and held 24 young women, including three Uzbek nationals, who were working as prostitutes. The prostitutes lived in a three-room apartment in Almaty that operated as a brothel for approximately three months. During the investigation, police found that some of the girls were trafficked to Almaty with promises of good jobs. When they arrived in Almaty, their passports were taken, and they

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were forced to work for very little pay. The women were living in squalid conditions and received only enough money for food. Police said that 15 of the women did not have documentation and were held. The detained Uzbek citizens were deported.

¶16. March 17, Interfax: Almaty police rescued a 19-year-old Kyrgyz woman who was sexually exploited for more than two months. After being promised a good job, she was trafficked to Almaty, her passport was taken away, and she was forced to prostitute herself. The woman had been beaten and received medical aid after her rescue. A 40-year-old female citizen of the Turksib Rayon of Almaty was arrested.

¶17. March 27, Azattyk Radio: Police officers in Taldykorgan began investigating trafficking to China for purposes of sexual exploitation after receiving reports from parents. A local businesswoman, Saule Zhaksygeldinova, had allegedly been recruiting local students to study at Chinese universities, but was reportedly selling them to work as prostitutes. The police repatriated 16 students back to Kazakhstan for questioning. No information has been confirmed.

¶18. April 28, Interfax, April 29, Zakon.kz: A 49-year old woman was arrested in Turkestan (South Kazakhstan Oblast) during a special police operation. Police found a 19-year-old woman from Shymkent and a 16-year-old orphan from the Sozaksyyi Rayon of the South Kazakhstan Oblast in the woman's apartment. Police determined that the women were kidnapped from Shymkent and sold in Turkestan for \$350 and \$700. The women were kept locked in the apartment and could only leave when forced to prostitute themselves in local saunas until one was able to escape. The 19-year-old told police that she met a young man in Shymkent who invited her to the caf and then to the park for a walk. When she got into his car, the young man took her to Turkestan and sold her. The other girl came to Shymkent for work. When she arrived, a young man used the same scheme to kidnap her. The woman operating the ring explained that she, a mother of five children and two grandchildren, was only in the business because she needed to feed her family.

#### LABOR EXPLOTATION

¶19. February 5, "Vremya": Three Uzbek citizens, a father and his two sons, were sold for \$200 and forced to work on a farm for more than 18 months in Atyrau. The father and his eldest son escaped from the farm and asked transport police officers at Kulsary train station for help. The police rescued the youngest son and initiated a criminal case against the owner of the farm.

¶20. February 23, Interfax, Aikyn: A 35-year-old man was arrested in Aktobe for selling a homeless man and woman for approximately \$50 each. Both victims worked under threat of physical violence. The trafficker was arrested after a local woman reported the exploitation to police. The Aktubinskaya DVD has received other reports of homeless people being sold and are investigating whether the same man was involved in other cases.

¶21. April 8 Interfax, April 20 Zakon.kz: Police officers have freed 25 Afghans who were forced to live and work in a mill in Karaganda. The Afghans reported to the police that they were lured to Kazakhstan with the promise of well-paid jobs. However, they had not been paid and police found a sack of dead pigeons, which the workers had been eating. Because the Afghans refused to file a complaint, the owner will not likely be charged with trafficking, but merely fined for using illegal laborers.

#### DEPORTATION OF ILLEGAL MIGRANTS

¶22. February 18 Interfax: Migration police officers and the city prosecutor's office conducted a four-day operation at markets throughout Astana. Of the 1,715 foreign citizens found in the markets, police found that 173 were in the country illegally. According to the migration police, the construction crisis has forced many illegal workers to the markets. Local employers are also bearing responsibility -- two citizens of Kazakhstan were fined for hiring illegal workers.

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¶23. February 18 "Express-K": Seven foreigner workers from Agip were detained in Atyrau. The workers, two from Great Britain, two from India, one from the Philippines, one from Algeria, and one from Uzbekistan, were working on a construction project in Karabatan. Police found that all seven were in the country on visitor visas and were deported.

¶24. February 12, Interfax: In Aktobe, 32 Chinese citizens working "for Sinoil" were detained. 25 had come to Kazakhstan with business visas and did not have permission to work. Administrative cases were filed against the 25 without proper visas and against the seven others for violations of registration requirements. Since the beginning of the year, 939 foreign citizens, mostly from Central Asia, have been charged with violations of registration and/or residency requirements.

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